

VA develops corporate process management tool

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WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — The Air Force Research Laboratory's Air Vehicles Directorate (VA) has developed and implemented the Air Vehicles Enterprise System (VAES) to facilitate management of VA's corporate processes.

The system provides tools for configuration management, dynamic roadmap generation, and conducting laboratory management reviews (LMRs). Additionally, VAES provides a two-level program/project structure, a job order number coding system, and reporting to the Defense Technology Information Center (DTIC).

Configuration management tracks and records all program changes and ensures accurate current year total obligation authority. This tool is instrumental in helping finance ensure VA does not over-commit appropriated funds. Dynamic roadmap capability helps ensure VA stays on the critical path to warfighter needs. This tool has been used to brief stakeholders on over 200 programs graphically displayed on seven major roadmaps. Automating LMRs eliminates paperwork, decreases the engineer's workload, standardizes the review format, and provides a historical record of all reviews. Providing a two-level structure and JON coding system facilitated financial tracking of VA's research efforts and saved valuable man-hours. Finally, VAES reporting to DTIC eliminated the need for the previous system — A Science and Technology Action Report System (ASTARS). Using VAES for DTIC reporting has dramatically increased the directorate's reporting accuracy, which reduces DoD-wide research effort duplication.

In the past, VA's program managers used ASTARS to capture program/project information and send that information DTIC. VAES now provides that reporting as well as collecting and managing data to facilitate corporate processes such as lab management reviews, investment strategy, and strategic planning. Currently, AFRL is developing a new set of tools to fully integrate its business processes. These processes are being designed to establish common business practices, data definitions and tools across the laboratory.

In the interim, the Air Vehicles Directorate has employed VAES to collect and manage all corporate data, such as a program's technology and funding. Use of VAES has increased reporting efficiency and facilitated corporate processes. Despite excellent results so far, the directorate is constantly seeking ways to improve VAES. A user group is also assisting in improving existing processes and identifying future VAES additions. @